Our school has agreed to participate in the “Cyber Friendly Schools Project” being conducted by the Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University.

Bullying behaviour between students occurs to some extent and in varying types in all schools. These behaviours are not accidental; they are intentional, unjustified, and repeated actions towards someone who cannot effectively stop these from happening.

Recently, instances of cyber bullying, behaviours that use communicative technology such as malicious SMS messages, or hurtful messages via the internet (e.g.: email, webpage or website, chat room, instant messages, game room or other game site or message board) have been reported to be occurring in Australian schools.

The Cyber Friendly Schools project provide evidence based materials, training and support for school staff and families to help to build student’s resiliency and reduce the likelihood or effects of cyber bullying and other aggressive behaviours.

Parents of Year 8 students in our school will receive an information letter and consent form asking for their child to participate in the Cyber Friendly Schools project. Students in Year 8 participating in the research project are required to complete three brief confidential self administered surveys during class time – one survey in each of Term 2, 2010; Term 3, 2011; and Term 3, 2012.

I encourage all students to be involved in this important research project. Reducing the risk of bullying is very important to our school and your son or daughter’s involvement will help improve knowledge and understanding of cyber bullying in Western Australian schools.

If you have received an information letter and you would like your Year 8 son or daughter to participate in this important research, please return your completed consent form in the reply paid envelope provided. Please contact Melanie Epstein on (08) 9370 6519 or by email: m.epstein@ecu.edu.au at the Child Health Promotion Research Centre if you have any queries about this project.

Please Note: This project has been approved by the Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact: Research Ethics Officer, Edith Cowan University, 100 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup WA 6027, Phone: (08) 6304 2170, Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au